

INTEGRITY

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Subject ~ Poverty & Riches

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EDITORIAL



URING the few years that we spend making our insignificant dent in God's universe, it is just as well to be counted among the poor. In the light of the Gospels we can hardly expect to encounter Christ and pass our days with Him in surroundings more elaborate than frugal comfort. Any other conclusion is pure sophistry. The debt that Providence exacts from each of us can be paid much more easily in installments than in a lump sum. A 'rags' lot today is preferable to the lot of a goat on the day of doom.

Such arguments as these were a commonplace among the Catholic poor of but a few generations back. Many of us were reared with parents with whom such sublime common sense was a heritage. Few of us have accepted the heirloom. It can only be reclaimed the hard way.

Like paralytics we must learn again to walk as our forebears walked naturally. Let us first throw back our heads and laugh and full-throatedly at the advertisers, the rich, the ambitious, whose liturgy before the altar of the great god Stuff constitutes the most ridiculous form of idolatry that the angels have ever seen. An entire generation of men have never before sold their birthright for that which is literally and precisely a mess of pottage. Wisdom begins here. Beyond it lies the freedom of a love affair with God.

THE EDITORS

The Church on Riches and Poverty

I shall attempt to bring out the main Christian principles in this matter of rich and poor. I offer no detailed application of them to particular questions of the moment (not even to those which have special interest for myself). My purpose is to rescue the principles from denial or misunderstanding. I know that to comprehend them is certainly not to solve our problems forthwith, but I hold that without their comprehension our problems will not be solved at all.

Definitions

First, an attempt at some definitions. Both "riches" and "poverty" are somewhat fluid expressions which easily lead to ambiguity. I cannot entirely remove this obstacle, but will suggest some distinctions which may be useful. In the first place "riches" (or "wealth," which throughout this article is merely a synonym) is a more neutral word than "rich." It may mean more than "external goods," many or few, and one may speak without irony of a laborer: "His only riches were his cottage and tools and garden." But in some contexts the word implies an excess of such goods, and this is normally so in the contrast between "riches" and "poverty." The word "rich," in any case, usually implies excess; to be rich is to have more than one needs.

The word "poverty" is felt as some kind of negative, but it is used—and I suppose must inevitably be used—in two senses. It is the negation sometimes of superfluity, sometimes of sufficiency. In the first sense it means having no more than one needs—frugal living; in the second it means having less than one needs—hard or very hard living. One may sometimes make a convenient distinction by saying "poverty" in the first sense, "destitution" in the second, but this is not always possible. The adjective closely follows the noun in usage; to be poor is to have no more than one needs or less than one needs.

Further, the sufficiency or deficiency of goods is relative to particular needs, so that "riches" and "poverty" become relative terms themselves. A man with a thousand pounds a year may well be rich but is not inevitably so; we cannot be sure without knowing also his necessary expenses, his obligations, the number of those dependent on him. Again, we cannot decide forthwith

* We consider it a great privilege to reprint this section of Mr. Shewring's introduction to *Rich and Poor in Christian Tradition*, reviewed in INTEGRITY last month. We heartily suggest that our readers get the book, which can be obtained in this country from David Hennessy, The Distributist Bookstall, Stortford Cross Roads, W. Va. The American price is \$3.75.

man with a hundred pounds a year is in poverty or in destitution. In all that follows, these qualifications are taken as understood.

The Possession of Wealth Is Dangerous

What then is the Christian teaching on the general status of riches and poverty? In the first place, riches as material things are good in themselves. This is teaching that nowadays needs emphasis, but in early centuries had really to be defended against a Manichaean view of the universe for which all material things were evil, among them gold and silver and food and clothing. Manichaeism is still with us, but scarcely that application of it, and I need only recall from Saint Leo that not only spiritual but material riches are good in themselves and come from God.

To turn from the things to possession of them—the possession of some external goods is necessary for the sustenance of ourselves and our families; and if necessary, then good. Their possession in abundance is in itself neither good nor evil. It may prove good when a man comes by riches honestly, when he does not set his affection on them as an end in themselves, when he uses them rightfully to the benefit of himself and others. It may prove evil when it estranges a man from virtue, through excessive concern or anxiety for them, or through pride which may arise from them. This is the teaching of Saint Thomas.

But lawful possession may nevertheless be dangerous, and Christian teaching has always stressed the reality of this danger—even the words of Christ and Saint Paul and Saint James, how could it do otherwise? "The harmful thing," says Saint Bernard, is not so much worldly substance as worldly cravings. And this is the principal reason for shunning riches—they seldom or never can be possessed without affection." "The possession of riches," says Saint Thomas, "has a natural tendency to thwart the perfection of charity, above all by alluring and distracting the mind . . . hence it is hard to keep charity among riches. For this reason Our Lord calls it hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. This is to be taken of one who in fact is rich; for as for a man who sets his affection upon riches, Our Lord declares it to be impossible; so Chrysostom interprets the text."

The having of riches then leads easily to the corruption of charity—in general, by giving the soul a false direction, in particular by encouraging in it the vice of pride and the vice of covetousness, the desire of money which is the root of all manner of evils (not that every particular evil is bound to spring from

this, but that there is no kind of evil which does not sometimes do so). This theme is developed by many authorities, not least Saint Ambrose Autpert, Saint Peter Damian, and Saint Catherine of Genoa (Damian, like other reformers among the priesthood, has a special zeal against avarice in priests. Saint Catherine shows a characteristic depth of insight when she says that the love of riches "dispossesses men of the dignity of the infinite.")

These spiritual dangers—of pride, of covetousness, of inordinate affection toward worldly things which begets disaffection toward heavenly things—are inherent in the possession of riches. They are more insidious than open crimes such as those of oppression and injustice, which for some rich men are no temptation. It is not denied that riches are in their own order a gift of heaven, a particular favor, a possible means to the glory of God and the service of one's fellows; but authentic Christian tradition remembers always that they are perilous. "It is enough," says Saint Augustine, "if riches do not destroy their possessors; if they do them no harm; help them they cannot." "The favors of this world," says Leo XIII, "are admonished that riches neither banish sorrow nor avail one whit to eternal happiness rather they are a hindrance to it." From that teaching one cannot escape, and it is a normal Christian sentiment that though rich men may surmount their obstacles and do great honor to the Church, they should never be rich "without misgivings." And they are reminded that temporal wealth, gift of God though it may be, may also prove a final reward for deeds undeserving eternal

Wealth and Status

One further point. In the feudal society of the Middle Ages it was taken for granted that wealth should follow status—that a man of important social functions should have wealth to perform them conformably, not that a man who chanced to be wealthy should therefore be given a high social status. This explains the dictum of Saint Thomas: "The rich are to be honored in so far as they hold a higher status in the community; if they are honored in view of their riches only, this will be the sin of acceptance of persons." In earlier and later forms of society where wealth and status were unrelated or status follows wealth, the strictures made long ago by Saint James held and hold good; Saint Jerome complains that in his time they were still needed.

Poverty is an Aid to Virtue

What of the status of poverty? Regarded as the possession of a minimum of external goods, or as the absence of their abundance, it is in itself as indifferent as the state of wealth; it is good

as far as it makes for virtue, bad in so far as it hinders this. But man wishes to lead the life of virtue—still more if he wishes the life of Christian perfection—it is far from indifferent whether or not he chooses the status of poverty. In the natural order, it is a reasonable preparation for the life of wisdom and attachment; in the supernatural order, it is a reasonable preparation for the life of charity and a needful one for that life in perfection. The notion of poverty as a natural foundation for the life of wisdom is strange indeed to the modern West, but it was familiar to ancient Sparta and Republican Rome, and there were Greek philosophers who abandoned wealth to pursue wisdom more easily. Though doubtless the motives here were not always pure—and in the supernatural order especially a self-chosen poverty might not be exempt from criticism—it would be ungracious in Christians to lay much stress on this. Rather we may repeat with Damian: "Let covetous Christians take heed of such examples and blush to see paganhood in themselves and Gospelhood in the pagan!" And still more should Christians respect those loftier conceptions of poverty which are held and followed by Moslems and Hindus in the search for spiritual perfection. Christianity has the means to enrich the soul by supernatural charity; it has no call to belittle them.

"It is in keeping with right reason for a man to cast wealth aside and to devote himself to the contemplation of wisdom. We read that some pagan philosophers did as much—Jerome tells us that Crates of Thebes, who once had been very rich, cast away a great quantity of gold when he went to Athens to study philosophy; he held that he could not have wealth and virtues both. Much more then is it in keeping with right reason that a man should forsake all goods to follow Christ perfectly, and hence we find Jerome praising the monk Rusticus: *In nakedness follow the naked Christ.*" Poverty is a means to perfection in so far as forsaking riches removes obstacles to charity, in particular these: the care riches bring with them . . . the love of riches, which increases with their possession . . . and the pride or vainglory which rises from them."

To put it most simply: poverty, not wealth, is the status of the ideal man on earth; a life of poverty, not a life of wealth, must be for Christians the pattern of perfection. Hence comes the great divergence between Christian and secular social reformers. The latter, as Eric Gill has said, desire the poor to become rich, but the Church desires the rich to become poor and the poor holy.

Holy Poverty Must Be Voluntary

But it is important to banish misunderstandings here. In the first place, material poverty is not commanded for all; it is of

counsel, not of precept. "Man is set between the things of world and the spiritual goods wherein lies eternal blessedness. The more he clings to either of them, the further does he depart from the other. If then a man clings wholly to the things of world—making them his last end and the spring and principle of his actions—he wholly forfeits the spiritual goods. This first direction is countered by the precepts. Yet to reach the goal of blessedness a man is not bound to cast away wholly everything that belongs to the world. If he uses worldly things without making them an end in themselves, he may attain everlasting blessedness. Only he will attain it more easily if he casts such things away wholly, and for this purpose the Gospel gives counsel accordingly."

Hence the poverty that the Church commends is of course voluntary—freely chosen, as by those who give up their wealth to take religious vows, or freely accepted, as by those who are brought to poverty or reduced to it by external circumstances but who nevertheless embrace it willingly and do not wish to withdraw from it. (Some writers—Saint Thomas, for instance—seem usually to envisage the first condition, but it is clear from many others that the second condition also constitutes "holy" poverty.)

Poverty is not Destitute

Lastly, the poverty meant is not destitution—it is the absence of superfluities, not the lack of necessities. A way of life which is frugality is the norm; not without its modest comforts, not without provision for the future, but with no luxuries and no great reserves; a humble life (though humility is by no means synonymous with quietness); a life which will always have the contempt of the world at large; a life where dependence on God is palpable, and where it is manifest that the things which are seen are temporal and the things not seen eternal—that, in essentials, is what the Church means by poverty. It may easily pass into destitution, but is by no means more perfect for doing so. For destitution, absolutely speaking, an evil, and an evil opposed to poverty, since it forces on men that care and concern for getting richer which by nature besets the state of riches and which poverty is meant to avoid. Borne with patience, like other human afflictions, it may be a means to spiritual progress, but it remains in itself a thing to be shunned and if possible abolished. The Church's blessing upon the poor extends to the destitute; her blessing on poverty does not extend to destitution. And should it be said that the extremer forms of religious poverty are, in effect, destitution, the answers are possible. One is that the material evil of destitution

may be voluntarily accepted for the sake of an incommensurable spiritual good. The other—which I prefer—is that the evil of destitution, like other evils, is not simply a negation but the negation of something needed by a particular subject. The lack of eyes, in the old example, is an evil for a man but not for a stone. It neither is it an evil for an angel, who has more eminent means of vision. Physical destitution is the lack of physical things one needs; but "the more one *is*, the less one wants," and a state which others would be one of destitution may be one of sufficiency for the saint.

The Importance of Social Justice

In pronouncing thus differently from the world on the status of riches and poverty, the Church does not waive the question of social justice. She is concerned above all with the salvation of souls; truly; but for that very reason she is also concerned with social justice. She says that the rich may be saved, but upon conditions that have immediate social bearings. She says that the poor are spiritually privileged, but she therefore regards with special severity the sins of the rich against the poor. She esteems voluntary poverty; she condemns an enforced destitution. She shows and declares that social conditions in which souls can be saved may nevertheless be the gravest obstacle to the salvation of souls; and for these conditions persons are ultimately responsible. The next point to be considered, therefore, is the status of persons, not things; that of the rich and that of the poor.

Regarded as individuals, the rich are blameless if they preserve the order of right reason in regard to their wealth—if they come by it honestly, do not make it an end in itself, and use it faithfully for the benefit of themselves and others. These conditions are more stringent than may at first sight appear.

Riches Must Be Earned Honestly

In the first place, the rich must come by their wealth honestly; and this applies alike to inheritance and to current earnings. An heir to ill-gotten goods is bound to restitution as far as may be. The responsibilities of such a position are strongly stated by the Church. And earnings must all be honest earnings. The maxim that "business is business" was as familiar in Saint Augustine's time as it is in ours; the answer remains the same. "When these men are told: *Commit no deceit*, they say, 'But how shall I make my living? One cannot have trading without trickery or business without deceit.' Nevertheless deceit is punished by God." The inexorable rule that means of livelihood must be honest is expounded

by Saint John Chrysostom, Saint Ambrose Autpert, Simone Fida Bourdaloue, and Pius XI.

Usury in particular has always been denounced as a means of wealth-getting which is both unlawful and oppressive. And not only what the world calls usury—there is also the thing disguised, there are the “usurious tricks” condemned by Leo XII. It is still extremely relevant to repeat the warning of Saint Augustine: “Beware then, my brothers, of usury and of interest-taking. Do not answer me: ‘But how then are we to live?’ You are seeking not means to life but means to death. . . . Better be than live on ill-gotten gains.”

The commercial world itself allows some transactions to be dishonest, but Christian standards are more exacting. After the Passion, observes Saint Gregory, Peter took to his nets again but not Matthew to his custom-house, “for there are many trades which it is hardly possible or simply not possible for a man to practice without sin.” In *Quadragesimo Anno* we may note how among the men condemned are not only the shameless speculators and the exploiters of limited liability but those who create and stimulate an artificial demand “without in the least concerning themselves whether or not their trade serves a decent purpose. It is not for me to particularize where the Pope does not, but it is clear that this warning to Christian consciences forbids many ways of making money which the world at large accepts without scruple.”

Rights and Duties of the Rich

Then again, the rich must not make their wealth an end in itself; and this means not only that they must abstain from covetousness of the flagrant kind, it means, further, that they must not acquiesce in that general attitude to material things—the comfortable life “without vice and without virtue”—which Massillon delineates with great subtlety.

And they must use their wealth in a proper manner for the benefit of themselves and others. As regards themselves, they have the right to satisfy both the needs and the decencies of their position; they have the duty to keep from luxurious excesses. As regards others, they are bidden to share their wealth with those who are in need.

At this point we begin to consider the rich not as individuals only but as members of society, and in particular in their relation to the poor. They have, of course, the negative duties not to despise the poor (“He who despiseth the poor upbraideth his Maker.”) and not to oppress them by theft or by usury or by unjust laws. But to abstain from these is little. “Let unjust

er, but let not justice stand idle. None suffers, you say, from
r power to harm, but let some men feel your power to help.
to take what belonged to others is not enough; you must also
: what belonged to you." *"Make to yourselves friends from
mammon of unrighteousness.* Perhaps the goods you have
a have been won from unrighteousness; perhaps the unright-
ness is merely this, that you have and another has not, that you
in abundance and another in need. . . . The superfluities of
rich are the necessities of the poor. When you possess super-
ty, you possess what belongs to others." "Those who neither
ke after others' goods nor bestow their own are to be admon-
ed to take it well to heart that the earth they come from is
mmon to all and brings forth nurture for all alike. Idly then
men hold themselves innocent when they monopolize for
mselves the common gift of God. In not giving what they
e received they work their neighbors' death; every day they
troy all the starving poor whose means to relief they store at
ne. When we furnish the destitute with any necessity we
der them what is theirs, not bestow on them what is ours; we
y the debt of justice rather than perform the works of mercy. . . .
Dives in the Gospel we do not read that he snatched the goods
others but that he used his own unfruitfully; and avenging hell
eived him at death not because he did anything unlawful but
ause he gave himself up utterly and inordinately to the enjoy-
nt of what was lawful." These words of Saint Leo, Saint
ugustine, Saint Gregory, repeat the teaching of a famous passage
Saint Basil.

Natural justice itself demands that in any community those
o have much should aid those who have little. "It is of the
ture of social justice to demand from each man everything that
necessary for the good of all." Those are the words not of a
munist but of Pope Pius XI. Natural reason demands also
t such help should be given in a spirit of respect. "To feed a
n without loving him is to treat him like a pig. To love him
hout respecting him is to treat him like a household pet. Honor
d respect come before the presentation of gifts." Those are
e words not of a Christian but of a Confucian. Christianity
nforces these claims and raises them to a higher mode by con-
ering a supernatural instead of a merely natural society, and the
tue of charity instead of merely the virtues of benevolence and
neficence. It is in this light that we must approach the often
sunderstood conceptions of stewardship and of almsgiving.

The Rich Should Be the Servants of the Poor

It is a commonplace of Christian teaching on riches that rich are not to regard themselves as absolute owners of worldly goods but as stewards and dispensers of them. If to many this teaching has appeared to savor of hypocrisy, the reason is not only the unchristian conduct and attitude of nominal Christians but also, and more fundamentally, the failure to grasp in this matter the reversal of secular standards made by the Church. For the secular world, the status of riches is in every way preferable to the status of poverty, and the rich (whether this be thought a good or a bad thing) are in almost every way more important than the poor. For the Church, the status of Christian poverty is essentially preferable to any status of riches, and the poor are essentially more important than the rich, not only because there are far more poor than rich (and in every age the great number of Christians have been poor) but because they are spiritually more privileged—because, in the words of the present Pope, “theirs is the kingdom of heaven; theirs is the readiest abundance of supernatural graces.” This teaching finds its most classic and ample statement in Bossuet’s great sermon *On the Eminent Dignity of the Poor*. Once understood as set out there, it will easily be traced in earlier writings whose full significance might not otherwise be seen.

This being so, it should become clear that whereas for the secular world the poor are the servants of the rich, for the Church the rich are the servants of the poor. The poor are by definition those who have no more than they need, and, if they are poor in the fully Christian sense, wish for no more than they need. But some begin by having less than they need—they are not merely poor but destitute; and poverty short of destitution may easily verge toward it. The frugal living which in ordinary conditions is self-sufficient may be driven by a hundred circumstances to something greatly below sufficiency. The destitute always, the poor often, are in need of help from reserves outside themselves—reserves they could not possess in person without changing the way of life and status. These reserves the rich by definition possess. They have goods beyond their needs, but if they are truly Christian are held to be unattached to them. It is their duty and privilege to apply such goods to the service of the poor and destitute.

Almsgiving

Hence “almsgiving”—a word and a conception that have come to bear an unfortunate connotation. Cynics deriding the practice have usually in their minds the picture, say, of a fat V.

ian squire, patronizingly dispensing in "charity" a trifling portion of notoriously ill-gotten gains. That is not almsgiving in the Christian sense. In the first place, if gains are in fact ill-gotten, their present owner is bound to restitution. He must restore them if possible to their rightful owner; failing that, he ought to be obliged to distribute them to the poor, but as an act of mere reparation which does not bring the merit of charity. Christian theology is quite explicit upon this point. Secondly, the rich are required to give alms readily and freely. The exact extent of their obligations has been debated by theologians, but the general mind of the Church could scarcely be better expressed than in Chrysostom's statement: "What constitutes alms is not mere giving but lavish giving." And the cynics' assumptions are sufficiently met by Chrysostom himself: "If a rich man came to me in the confessional and told me he always gave a beggar a penny, I would no more forgive him than I would the devil." Thirdly, patronage is out of the question. Alms are to be given to the poor as to friends. What we can do through our friends we can in a sense do ourselves, as Aristotle says, and in the same way what is possessed by our friends is in a sense possessed by ourselves. And there should be among men a mutual friendship in so far as they help each other mutually whether in spiritual or in temporal services." Or after all the word "alms" has acquired an ineradicably pejorative sense, then we must forget it and think of gifts instead. To receive a stranger's gift may perhaps be humiliating, but it cannot be so to receive a friend's. And in the Christian scheme the rich and the poor are not merely friends but brothers, and brothers in Christ; it is precisely this that raises the virtue of almsgiving from the natural to the supernatural order—the order of charity in the full sense of the word.

It is on these conditions that the rich, in Bossuet's phrase, receive their naturalization into the Christian Church, assimilating themselves to the status of the poor and becoming able to share their privileges.*

The Old and the New Laws

At this date it should not be necessary, but I fear it still may

* Certain appeals to the rich in terms of "celestial bargaining" may seem to some readers undignified. I would observe in the first place that such appeals are made by writers of the loftiest spirituality (e.g. by Angela of Foligno), so that one could think twice before decrying them. Then they are plainly a fair *argumentum hominem*. Lastly, as in other arguments with regard to morals, irrationality of the mind may often stand out even more than perversity of the will. If a man's main concern in life is bargain-making, it seems intolerable that he should be blind to the best bargain of all. And the rich man in the Gospel is called not *Thou knave!* but *Thou fool!*

be, to point out that the difficulties attending the salvation of rich are not to be attenuated by a simple reference to the rich of the Patriarchs. That a rich man may be holy the Church has never denied; it is possible now, and was more easily possible under the Old Law. But "the perfection of poverty was brought in by Christ"; and "in the Old Covenant promises were of earthly things, in the New Covenant they are of the kingdom of heaven." As both Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas observe, the rich man of today would be ill-advised to presume on the example of Abraham. Had Abraham been in the place of the rich young man, he would cheerfully have resigned his wealth, not gone away sorrowing.

The Vices of the Rich

Of vices characteristic of the rich I have fortunately no occasion to speak; the major authorities have said enough already. I will only remark that a great difference is observable between the sweeping statements of some and the moderate tone of others. Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose, as in some passages of the Bible, the rich and the wicked seem almost to be identified. In Saint Augustine, Saint Leo, Saint Thomas, as in other passages of the Bible, this is clearly far from being the case. And where some writers insist that good rich men are hard to find, others consider them fairly numerous. Saint Bonaventure contrasts other times with his. "In times past the rich were good and compassionate, modest and patient. Witness David and Solomon and Job and so many others—how they helped the poor, how they humbled themselves, distributing what they had themselves, never seizing what others had! But now look about you and see the perversity of rich men, letting their neighbor die for lack of the food they give to dogs and swine, like Dives with Lazarus; and not only do they give or wish to give, but in many fashions they take from the poor, as we see with usurers." These divergences of expression need not perplex us. They spring partly no doubt from differing judgment and temperament, but much more from differing circumstances and audience. When a zealous Bishop is addressing an audience of mainly rich men, at a time and place where the rich are in fact largely corrupt, it is natural that he should inveigh against them with a vehemence that in other conditions would be excessive and out of place; in his anxiety to bring home the wickedness to the wicked he may not pause to make the qualifications which might naturally be made by a theologian in his study or by the preacher himself were he writing an abstract treatise on morals. I need scarcely point out that Saint Ambrose, for instance, does not weigh his words as Saint Thomas does, or that Bourdaloue

beginning and ending his sermon makes reservations which he gets in the heat of his eloquence. The most violent preachers against the rich would be bound to endorse the words of Saint John Chrysostom: "I am often reproached for continually attacking the rich. Yes, because the rich are continually attacking the poor. Those I attack are not the rich as such, only those who misuse their wealth. I point out constantly that those I accuse are not rich but the rapacious; wealth is one thing, covetousness another. Learn to distinguish." Or as Saint Augustine says to the rich: "I do not say: 'You are damned if you have possessions,' but: 'You are damned if you presume on them, if you are puffed up by them, if you consider yourselves important because of them, because of them you disregard the poor, if you forget your common human status because you have so much more of vanities.'"

For ourselves, the lesson is plain enough. Those who are rich must receive these denunciations to heart, glad to be warned if they are not reached by them; after all, it is not an accident that throughout the Church's history such numbers of great and holy men have uttered invectives against the rich which they never uttered against the poor. Those who are not rich should be slow to apply such condemnations to men whose riches they see but whose dispositions and circumstances it is impossible for them to know.

The Blessedness of the Poor

Christian teaching upon the status of the poor has to some extent been anticipated in the foregoing pages, but it will do no harm to begin afresh. And the first and most essential point is that in Christianity the poor are *blessed*. Certainly those who receive this blessing are not simply the poor, they are the poor in spirit; but—whatever certain discussions upon the text might seem to insinuate—"the poor in spirit" is by no means a graceful periphrasis for the rich. On the contrary, as Bishop Challoner says in a quiet way, "This beatitude or happiness, which brings with it the title to the kingdom of heaven, belongs in the first place to them that are poor by condition and in effect, provided they be contented with their poverty and cordially embrace it as the beloved companion and favorite of Christ and his saints." First the poor in the literal sense—those who are materially in the status of Christ need only to make and to keep themselves spiritually worthy of that status; afterwards the rich, who have chosen to keep a status visibly different from that of Christ but may nevertheless become poor by adoption through detaching themselves from riches and loving and honoring and helping the literally poor. This is clear enough in Bossuet, for instance; it is also implied in other

writers who might seem at first sight to make little distinction between riches and poverty in the material sense. "Every class of men," says Saint Leo, "is allowed a share in the virtue of poverty; for men unlike in possessions may yet be alike in will; the difference in earthly goods makes no matter when men prove equal in spiritual wealth." Yet just before, where he has given humility as the touchstone of poverty of spirit, he adds at once: "But it can be no doubt that this blessing of humility is more easily attained by the poor than by the rich; meekness and poverty go hand in hand together, pride and riches are close companions." And then he goes on to say that humility and kindness and charity may be found in a great number of the rich, when he comes to the patterns of a true poverty of spirit he names only Our Lord and the Apostles (dwelling especially on Saint Peter). Again, Saint Chromatius repeats that not all the poor are blessed, but that only those who have despised worldly riches; yet his actual examples are the Apostles (especially Saints Peter and Paul) and the primitive community at Jerusalem.

To resume—the poor represent the person of Christ as the rich do not. Hence they are venerable and of eminent dignity. They are intercessors for the rich, whose material benefits they repay with spiritual. They help the rich not merely as any one may help a friend or benefactor by prayer, but as spiritually privileged persons who are richer in faith.

The Rights of the Poor

What of the rights of the poor? Negatively, they are not to be despised or oppressed. Positively, they are to be loved and honored, justly paid for their work and helped in distress. These points are commonplaces with my authorities, but I ought to touch on some applications of them which have been specially the concern of modern Popes.

The laborer's right to his wage is one of the most inalienable rights of mankind; the refusal of it is denounced in the Bible from the Pentateuch to Saint James. A just wage is one which enables not only a man but his family to live—and to do more than live. That "no one should live unbecomingly" is a principle that binds on the poor as well as on the rich.

The poor have a right to work—and to work of a kind worthy of man in general and suitable to the particular man; they should have reasonable freedom to choose their work.

The poor have a right to private property; and indeed the whole notion of private property, which most modern reformers associate with the rich and with large properties, is in Christ

ought associated particularly with the poor and with small properties. The most characteristic form of this is the smallholding "on which the family lives and from whose products it wholly or partly draws its livelihood."

These rights, which belong to the poor of all ages, have been clearly and amply set forth by recent Popes. Further, the Popes have spoken of certain conditions peculiar to our time. I will return to this a little later. I wish first to say something on the duties of the poor.

Duties of the Poor

The poor have the same general human duties as the rich—for example, the duty to make their living by honest means (though this of course implies that they have a choice of work). Their special duty springs from their spiritually privileged status—the duty not to presume on that status or rashly condemn the rich who do not share it visibly. Saint Augustine, who himself lived in voluntary poverty and who oftener than his great contemporaries seems to have addressed a congregation of listeners mainly poor, is particularly anxious that they should not take their vocation for granted. More than once he points out that the story of Dives and Lazarus is not one-sided in application; Dives damned and Lazarus saved, but it is Abraham the rich who gives the beggar into his bosom. He speaks continually to the same effect. "You who are rich must give of your possessions; you who are poor must curb your desires." "You, the poor man, are glancing at the rich man by you; but perhaps he has money and yet no covetousness, while you have no money and yet have covetousness." "A man may have wealth in plenty; if he remains without pride in it, he is poor. A man may have nothing, and yet be full of pride and cravings; God counts him among the damned and reprobate." And today, when the poor may so easily learn false standards from the rich, the warning is more than ever necessary that they as well must be poor in spirit.

Present Conditions

To speak particularly of our own age, it is obvious that new conditions have enormously and outrageously increased what may be called the usual evils of human society. In the first place, there is the flagrant contrast between extremes of riches and destitution, to which the Popes so often return. As has often been said already, the possession of riches is not forbidden by the Church, but there comes a point where excessive possession is wholly wrong. *The poor you have always with you.* In so far as true poverty is concerned, the Church is thankful it should be

so; it is an assurance of her continued sanctity. In so far as education is concerned, it means that the duties of the rich are continually urgent; they were never more urgent than now.

And whereas in certain societies of the past it has been possible for some men to be very much richer than others and for the poor to live their own lives—in hardship but in comparative independence—in our own society those possessed of great riches have won control over more and more of the lives of the poor. When the state intervenes, it is usually at the price of more rigid control.

More generally, the chief notes of our present social conditions are impersonality and irresponsibility. We suffer less from the personal accumulation of wealth than from the impersonal control of credit and the monopoly of finance. We have passed from the brutality of individual employers to a general acquiescence in means and conditions of production which necessarily deform and degrade the human person. We take it for granted that both work and investment should in general be irresponsible. We have a blind system which disregards the family and the individual only—and him not as a person but as a tool. In all these matters I send the reader to the pronouncements of the Popes, with their clear denunciation of evils, their assertion of spiritual principles, their insistence on the rights of the family and the human person, on the need for private property and the guar-

National Wealth and Poverty

A last word on national wealth and national poverty. A community may rightly accumulate riches in a way which would be improper for individuals. It is good that a state should be prosperous, but the essence of such prosperity is not that goods should superabound—rather that they should be so distributed and so used that the citizens of the state may reach their proper development as persons. It is possible for a nation as for an individual to set its aim on material wealth unconditionally and to make it an end in itself, as something to be achieved no matter how. Such a nation is inescapably condemned. "I will take away out of the midst of thee thy proud boasters. . . . And I will leave in the midst of thee a poor and needy people, and they shall praise the name of the Lord."

WALTER SHEWRING

The Three Stages of the Exterior Life

Do you waste your days in petty acts of avarice and envy high estate of the initiates in Temples of Tedium, who have reached Complete Possession? It is a mistake to think that this is only for the few. Complete Possession is open to all who persevere in the difficult but clearly outlined way to the fullness of the Exterior Life. There are certain precepts which can be gleaned from the lives of those who have chiseled out the acquisitive Way.

The Exterior Life may be divided into three stages: the Negative or Grubbing, the Middle or Grabbing, and Economic Possession for those who will persevere to the end.

Purge Out Pity

When the beginner first sets his faltering steps on the true path, he finds spiritual inclinations still strong. He is filled with desires for love, friendship and other weaknesses. These must be ruthlessly stamped out if we are to progress. The mind must be purged of all such soft notions.

Daily aspirations will help such as: "A penny saved is a penny earned," or "Blessed is the man who has gone after gold." In order to fill the mind with prosperous thoughts a large amount of secular reading is necessary. The *Lives of the Tycoons*, the *Philosophy of Parsimony*, and treatises on statistical thingology will be very helpful. Reading about millionaires will teach us to admire their virtues and fill the mind with tantalizing desires.

This reading will supply you with food for daily meditation. We cannot love what we do not know. Hence memorizing stock market quotations is beneficial so that we can whisper something like "General Motors 45¾" in time of temptation to ward off the urge to return to our former aimless ways. Reading all the back pages of magazines will quickly teach us the thousand things necessary for the fullness of the Exterior Life.

Frequent attendance at movies may seem a waste of time but they are a great aid in forming the proper pictures in our minds. They are the primer of the Exterior Life and teach us to admire the saints of secularism and to desire to be rich like them.

Quotations of Consolation

You may at first receive some small consolations. The purely material contemplation of money will distract you. Your first hundred dollars will seem like a goal reached but do not be misled. It may be a temptation from some intruding angel to resume your careless ways. You are destined for greater things and must

not be sidetracked by the petty. Your spiritual nature will to assert itself. Be firm. "Get thee behind me, spirit" must your slogan.

Reading of the financial pages and frequent visits to banks for a few moments' meditation in the presence of money will be helpful. These will fortify you against kindliness or generosity. These meditations will not be fruitful, however, unless they are fortified with resolutions to carry out small acts of virtue each day. We can begin in a small way by holding back a few pennies from the newsboy, of going without lunch to save a few nickels.

Onward, Silver Soldiers

Here we must beware of acting in a natural way so as not to acquire money. It is only by firm acts of penny pinching that can rise to larger conquests that will set us apart from our spiritual past. Remember, if a man gains his soul where is the profit?

When we have acquired all the desires we can and have begun scrimping and saving, short-changing and cheating at every opportunity, we grow stronger in pecuniary habits and can begin to transfer our endeavors to higher things. We can begin judicious spending. The virtue of spending will take us far along our chosen road, if we do it wisely, to cultivate the right people. We must be careful to associate only with those who can do good or those whom we can supplant.

Giving only to those who do not need it is worthy, and we must fight temptations to give to someone in need. Avoid the occasions of charity, unless in rare cases we can obtain a great amount of publicity.

Graduation to Grabbing

Now comes the transitional stage when we attain a certain eminence and are tempted to rest on our laurels. We have just a little more than the neighbors and are objects of envy. We only circulate among people with money or influence.

We have come to a state of easy budgeting when cost is the first consideration. We have learned the wisdom of doing our brother before he does us, and of avoiding friendships that are of no benefit. Compared to our former state we are well off.

This is a very dangerous period. You will enter the dark night of hesitation, which is the point at which so many ambitious beginners fall by the wayside. They become satisfied with petty conquests, a mere taste of wealth. The law of diminishing returns seems to have set in and conquests are more difficult. B

ou going to stop here and always be a grubber, or go on to grabber?

The Grace of Grabbing

Now you must, if you are to go on, make a complete consecration of all to the one pursuit. You must take the final plunge and Complete Possession. You must desire all things, achieve all things. A firm resolution of ruthlessness must be made or all is lost; a resolution of insatiability, a vow that you will never stop until you have acquired all.

Do not let the fact that so few reach the summit discourage you. So many retain that last spark of humanity that deters them from final success.

Once this crisis is passed your life will be illumined, everything will have the gleam of gold. Then the pursuit is all. You leave family, friends, and spend day and night contemplating the great things. Even your relaxations will be spiced with big deals. Remember he who will not sell father and mother and follow his own dreams, is not worthy of wealth.

You will be a big man now and bigger temptations will come to you. Many people will depend on you and you may be tempted, when you have so much, to share some small part with them. This will be the last great temptation before the state of the True Self is reached. You must ruthlessly suppress it by suppressing everyone of trying to deprive you of what you worked so hard to get. Remember you are now master of all, the capitalist of your soul.

Desires will now be filled as fast as they occur. Doubts will cease to dissipate. Everything will seem to come to you with ease. Remember the last doubt that lingered, that some day you would be disappointed enough? Now in a blinding intuition that will consume the rest of your life, you know. You are completely given over to the pursuit, completely possessed and you cry: "I can never be filled. I can never be satisfied!"

JOHN C. HICKS

I SHOULD HOPE SO!

The chronic poor we are assured
Are thus because of vice,
The wealthy prosper (naturally)
By being very nice.



The Joy of Poverty

(Editors' Note: We wrote a friend of ours, now expecting her fifth baby, and asked her to send us a simple statement of her attitude toward the poverty she has known so intimately. We enclosed a five dollar bill, just in case she might be short. This is her reply.)

Dear Carol and Ed,

Thank you ever so much for the five dollars. It's like the Bill did get a job, shortly after I wrote that letter chiding you for your "half-baked" praying. This time you hit the jackpot. Two weeks ago he got a job at seventy-five dollars. Several nights ago the bosses in a club where he used to work called us from New York and asked Bill to come back to work for them. He used to be just one of the players in the band there. This time they want him to get a band together and be the leader. They're giving him one hundred dollars. So in about two weeks he'll be there or at least that is how it looks *now*. I'm stunned and haven't quite digested it. Although I shouldn't be surprised at what God does. But He always does so much *more* than I expect. The seventy-five was okay with me, but the hundred is rather breathtaking.

However, that's getting away from the five dollars. So Bill is working but naturally it's taking almost every penny of his wages to pay our bills. We owe so much to so many, we just don't know which to pay first. And last week it was the mortgage and taxes payment at sixty-four dollars, and when you figure Bill's gasoline money for each day, it left very little for food. I bought a bag of whole wheat flour, some beans, a dozen eggs, two boxes of powdered skim milk, and five pounds of stew beef at 19¢ per pound. We had an adequate (it would seem) diet of oatmeal with powdered milk, homemade bread, and a variety of beef meals: beef stew, vegetable soup with beef, braised beef with baked beans, beef barbecue with beans, and so forth.

Considering that not so long ago we were subsisting on oatmeal and potatoes, this was sumptuous fare. However, my stomach has been in outright rebellion for weeks. I feel it working into knots every time I cook those meals. The spicy smells of the barbecues and baked beans make it real. A few mouthfuls of oatmeal and that skim milk gets like chalk in my throat, and if I finally force it down, it doesn't stay put anyhow. The whole wheat flour is altogether too rich. Even half white, half wh

eat wouldn't stay, so rather than ruin any more good grain by mixing that useless white flour with it I stopped even trying to bread.

As a result I keep getting hungrier and the knots in my stomach get tighter. And all these weeks I've been thinking, I only had roast chicken with gravy and cranberry sauce and glass of whole milk . . ."

Sounds silly, doesn't it? And every time I'd read an article or see a picture of the starving children of Europe and elsewhere I feel so ashamed of myself. But I kept on wanting it. And then I started wishing out loud. At every meal I'd say to Bill, "If only this were roast chicken with gravy . . ." Last week Bill said, "Wait till next payday—even if we have to let some bill wait, I'll have a chicken dinner on Tuesday" (that would have been Tuesday).

So I kept on cooking meals and all the time those smells (which were really good smells) were a torture to me and actually gave me pains in my stomach. And I'd say to myself, "Tuesday—wait until Tuesday."

The funniest part of it all is that I don't ordinarily care about food. I mean I eat because we have to live but one thing has always been as good as another to me. And why it had to be chicken?

Saturday morning I woke up with the worst gnawing pains and I lay there just wanting chicken with gravy and cranberry sauce, and I knew I couldn't stand it any longer.

While I cooked the breakfast oatmeal, I thought, "Today I must have that dinner, because I must have it today. How will it come? Bill has only a dollar to hold him till payday and he needs it all for gas. Then my folks will come out with chicken but no, that won't do, the house is a mess. I don't want anyone come out today. It's awful and I'm too sick and tired to clean. Then how? A check—that's it! Some manuscript. . ."

So I watched for the mailman while the children ate their oatmeal, and the way they eat bowls of that stuff and love it, is astounding. The mailman came earlier that day, bless his heart. I ran out to the box and looked over the envelopes. Nothing about the way of money. I fingered the INTEGRITY envelope: thick, too thick for just a letter; not an advertisement, that was for a month. Why it must be an appeal for money. Saint Joseph's must be coming up. People who never ask at other times will beg in March. So I put it down again, thinking, "I'll send them a dollar in two weeks. I'll be able to give *that* much by then." I

went back into the kitchen to get more beef out of the freezer and start the meal so it would be ready by noon, put the beans in the oven, then brought out the rest of the mail to read. I was standing over that steaming, stewing beef in a mild agony with the unwanted aroma assailing my nostrils when I opened your letter and the five dollar bill slid right into my hands. I hate to sound irreverent but do you recall all those times in the Bible—or it seemed like a lot of times—a dove would circle over Our Lord and a Voice would be heard saying, "This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased"?

My head was spinning, I was so happy. Isn't God good? He doesn't mind how silly you are. He gives you things like this. Surely I must be the most spoiled child in the world. I have the most indulgent Father.

As to My Ideas About Poverty...

I can't even think about poverty any more without becoming joyful. And although I say these things to a few close friends who might be sympathetic to such ideas, I hesitate to make any public statements on the matter for fear of giving scandal.

Won't they be shocked to hear that I am enamored of poverty and insecurity? How can people approve when we go on having babies every year or two and yet never know from day to day or from week to week what our financial status will be?

And wasn't it a foolhardy thing not so many weeks ago when we had no money and were suffering the effects of months of unemployment, that I should have dared to pray that Bill would not take a certain job open for him? What kind of a job? Civil Service with a steady income, sick-leave pay, vacation with pay, pension, and an opportunity for advancement—and only a walk from our house. All the thoughts that ran through our mind. Did it not seem providential that of all the places we went to live we should have come here so close to those government buildings? And wasn't it better than commuting? And wasn't it the *sensible* thing to do? And surely the Church has always taught in her social dogmas that these are things men should have, especially *family* men. It certainly would have brought peace to the hearts of our many friends and relatives who were anxiously "sweating out" this unemployment spell with us. It was always the shadow of insecurity hanging over us that troubled those who love us. They didn't mind the ever-growing family but they would say, "If only he had a *steady* job. If only he'd get out of *that* line and into something secure."

And there came a day he said, "I've made up my mind. I've decided to take that job. Things can't go on like this any longer. We can't exist on unemployment insurance and I can't see my family survive. . . ."

So it was decided. And we just sat there not daring to say anything more about it. And I felt a kind of sorrow coming over me. From now on we would have a regular, certain income. All we had to do was to sit down and work out a budget, and for all the years ahead there would always be that money and life could be planned and set. No financial worries, no uncertainties.

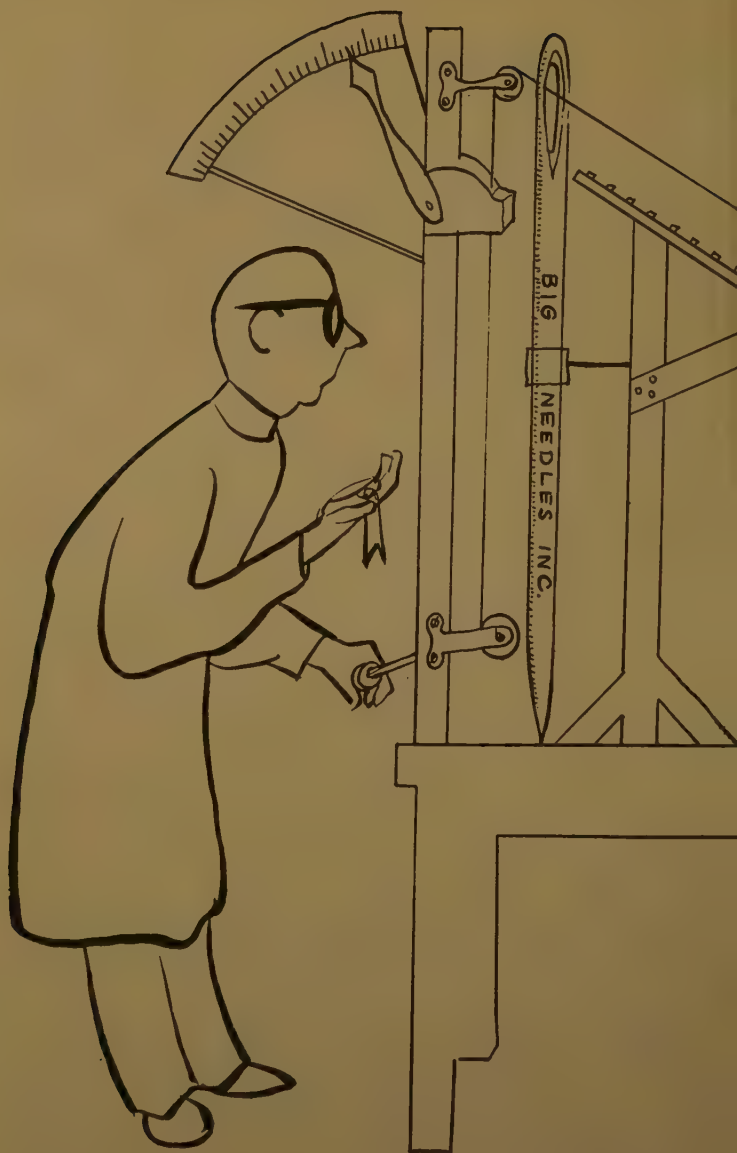
But (and here is where my talk grows scandalous) no more surprises, no more unexpected incidents. We had had no security but divine security, a complete, all-abiding confidence in God. He would always provide. No matter what earthly and temporal circumstances played upon our lives He would supersede them. If we just kept doing our best, and just held tightly to His hand, He'd always be with us. But now we were to have a new kind of security, a prosaic, earthly kind. Ah well, perhaps this was the way He meant it to be. Perhaps He was saying, "Time the game has ended. You've had enough now of thrills and adventure and excitement in your quest for your daily bread. Now settle down and take it this way." Yes, it could be that this job was God's will for us. I wanted to be a good sport about it and sensible and just thankful ("thank God for *everything*," you know) but I couldn't help murmuring heavenwards, not a complaint, just a reminder, "But it won't be as much *fun* this way."

And then the telephone rang and Bill reached over and picked up the instrument. "It's Charlie. He has a job for me, two hours a week." I said, "Take it, take it. One job leads to another. It will work out. Say 'yes'!"

And he said "yes." The safe, sane, earthly wall of security was gone and the sadness went with it. There was nothing left to sustain us but God. We suddenly felt lighthearted and happy again.

It isn't that we believe everyone should turn down steady employment, regular employment, temporal security. On the contrary, we approve of all those blessings and pray that God will be plentiful to all our hard-working brothers and sisters in Christ.

It's just that we feel that God must have meant otherwise for us. And that is a big broad statement to make but it's true, that the times we are happiest are the times when we are not sure of anything except the fact that God is our Father and He loves us and takes a special interest in our affairs, and He always gives



The Fallure of te



us whatever we need or *should have* and sometimes even fool little unimportant things we don't actually have to have but would like.

Oh yes, I know we are not privileged characters partaking of His generosity. He loves *all* His children and does as much for any of them. But with us it seems to be in our nature to live in *absolute dependence* on Him. And the only thing that keeps us absolutely dependent on His loving care is to be without earthly security.

Do you shake your head in disapproval? Are we scandalizing you? Are all those who have rushed to our assistance over this, that and the other thing, thinking, "Why the beggars! Are we not even ashamed! And saying they wouldn't have it otherwise?"

Don't blame us too hastily. Maybe it has to be so for our own personal sanctification and eventual salvation. After all, there are some people who never go to church unless there's a sickness or trouble in the home. And maybe that's why God sends them periodic sicknesses and troubles. He's got to get His children to Him somehow, and if that's the only thing that will bring them . . . well? And perhaps we are the kind who would grow forgetful about Him if we had a lifetime guarantee of temporal blessings. So He keeps us with no hope, no promise of anything—but Divine Providence. With some people you have to do things the hard way.

Strangely enough, having nothing but Him, we know, our lightheartedness and joy in living that far outweighs all the little everyday troubles and upsets in our lives. And now we know why Saint Francis enjoyed his married life, being wedded to Lady Poverty. And we know why the highways and byways and all the Italian countryside echoed his songs and rang with his laughter.

* * *

It wasn't always this way with us, nor did this living under the Will of God come about overnight. When we married we were much like any other couple of our world. The war was on and Bill in service, expecting to transfer out of the city at any time. We had rented a very lovely, two-room apartment in one of the prettiest parts of Brooklyn. The rent was high but I was still a career girl and my salary could handle it. No one expects an ordinary seaman to have that kind of money. Babies? We had considered all that before marriage. We were Catholics and knew the teaching of the Church: no birth control. But more than that we wanted children. We were a curious mixture of the self-sufficient, independent pagan and the loyal-to-our-tenets

colic. It was all settled. We would have nine children, one every two years. That would get them all in before I hit forty.

I still get a little wide-eyed now when I look back on our assumption that you could have babies to order much like spaghetti dinner in a restaurant. That was the pagan in us.

How would it be done? By means of Rhythm, of course. A safe and sane compromise between the world's way and the Lord's call it—the difficult, unthinkable, any other way. That was the Catholic in us.

We had a twinge of conscience about it. There was a lease we signed and we knew I couldn't work and have a baby too. I consulted a priest. Would it be all right to practice Rhythm for one year, and spend that year in the apartment? It sounds awfully silly now but that place was home to me from the first moment I set eye on it and it was a very precious thing and more valuable than a baby which had not been seen yet and anyhow we were going to be *nine* children. He did a very wise thing, the priest. He might have said, "No, don't take the apartment. You've got to leave things up to God and take your chances." And I would have obeyed but the psychological effects might have retarded the flow of grace coming our way. Instead, he said, "If the place means so much to you, rent it. But just remember *no* children in your marriage. Don't commit any sin . . . oh, and I wouldn't ask you to sign any lease."

So we went back relieved and thoroughly happy, and signed the lease anyhow because I figured if we did have a baby we'd have it and they wouldn't hold us to the contract because babies are the gift of God.

We were happy there. The place had something about it that made us happy. It wasn't only the marriage, it was the home. And it was home to us from the start. After you're in a home atmosphere, happy together, growing together in the love that Christian marriage inspires a man and wife, you act in the grace of God. And there's where the baby came in. We would talk about our "children" often. Sooner or later the thought had to force itself. Supposing we never have any? That was the question, "How do we even know we could have one?" "Supposing I came pregnant, how could anyone even say if the baby would be mine?" Then that baby loomed more important than the beloved apartment and it would seem that even if we had to sacrifice our home, we must know if we could have a baby. Finis Rhythm.

Several months later we moved out of our happy home. There was no arguing the point, a baby was infinitely better than an

apartment. But that didn't stop me from shedding bitter tears at the leave-taking. And no place ever after was quite like it and perhaps there never again will be one quite so perfect this side of heaven.

Our next stop was a housing project close to the Brooklyn Navy Yard. It would have been harder to find a greater contrast. But we were glad to have a place of our own. Those were months of never-ending sickness, days and nights of nausea. And between sick spells I budgeted the fifty dollars a month allotted me and whatever cash Bill brought in besides. We bought our furniture piece by piece. But relatives bought the bedroom set and kitchen set. Until the chairs and table arrived, and in those days you really waited for furniture delivery, we used the beds as chairs and set up a suitcase between them for a table. There was much to be done in the way of putting up curtains and covering the floors—and Bill came home on twelve-hour passes or weeks end liberty. It was a hectic existence and not easy but we were happy through it all and we had begun to witness the first manifestations of Divine Providence. It was the way an insurmountable obstacle would be overcome, the way an urgent debt would be paid by an unexpected gift of money. And there was something not quite credible in the way the little we had to care of so much. There didn't seem to be a real proportion between income and outgo and after a time we just figured it had something to do with God looking after us and let it go at that.

The main thing around which our lives centered was the baby. And we were brought closer than ever by this new tie. Our spiritual development was another blessing. From the start we had been frequent, almost daily, communicants. There was a chapel and Catholic priest at Bill's base so even when he was not at home he was able to attend Mass in the morning. We had married in the month of March so had placed our marriage under the patronage of Saint Joseph and had begun a novena to him to prepare for his feastday. We said our prayers together and followed a kind of liturgy in living without quite realizing it. For each month is dedicated to a special saint or occasion and was continued including novenas in our daily prayers: June for the Sacred Heart; July, the Precious Blood, and so on. There was no reason to presume before marriage that things would go that way. We were religious to an extent but this was really extraordinary. You will have to take my word for it. It was something new and unusual and we never actually thought about what we were doing from an objective viewpoint. Prayer marked our days.

and filled our life and it came about as naturally as eating and sleeping. Afterwards when I thought back on that first year I came to see that there is absolutely no limit to the graces God pours down on married people. They have only to receive and correspond to them. It seemed to have begun with the taking of vows and the Nuptial Mass. How God must love every bride and groom and bless especially the marriage that is "marriage in Christ."

A few weeks after our first wedding anniversary our son was born. The next day Bill was sent south to a base for commando training.

The birth of the baby actually posed a new problem in our lives. It had been such a startling and severe ordeal that I remained weak and sick for long afterwards. Actually the rest of the family revealed it had not been a surprise to them because I had looked so bad all during pregnancy that they had been dreading what might happen at birth. I had been too ill to know how I had looked. They were relieved that the baby and I both survived and took the attitude that "it had better be several years before it happened again."

Bill had been given his share of "after all, if you love her, have some consideration. . . . Don't kill the poor girl." He had been thoroughly frightened anyhow and that kind of talk, which seemed to put all the blame for my pain and suffering directly on him, didn't help him much.

No one said anything to me. They all thought I still looked half dead and had learned a lesson. Frankly, I had only enough strength to concentrate on the big project on hand, breast feeding my son.

There are so many factors that color a life. You could write a novel on one day in a life. There is always more to be left out than can ever be put in the telling.

I have to get right on to the next big incident which bound us more closely to the Divine Will. The letters between Bill and me had considered the pros and cons of another baby. It was hard to find many pros. The first consideration was my health. It had grown worse since the baby's birth, I was alone (because I wanted it so) in the apartment taking care of the baby. Another pregnancy would mean another nine months of invalidism and someone else would have to care for our son. Finally it would place a burden on our parents who would have to assume responsibility for both baby and me, etc., etc. It ceased to be a matter for discussion, however, when one day there arrived a letter from

Bill saying he thought it best to take a vow of chastity. In my state of health I should have been relieved at the prospect of no longer going through the ordeal of childbirth. But while I deeply appreciated the spirit of love and self-sacrifice on my husband's part and all for my benefit, it seemed like a negative solution and a running away from the problem. At the first opportunity I hastened over to the Franciscan church on Thirtieth Street because there confessions are heard all day. I chose not a particular priest but a shorter line.

Only the dear Lord knows the grace and goodness that flowed from that church! I had explained the situation quickly and completely. Space does not permit me all that wonderful talk he gave, though I still remember every word of it. He opened my mind and eyes to a broader vista of Christian marriage than I had seen before. Our society prides itself on independence and self-sufficiency, shudders at accepting help from others. He banished the parents' burden idea by explaining God's design in the Christian family, the role our parents play in helping us and what we will do some day for our own children, but best of all the answer that goes beyond Rhythm, planning, abstaining.

"How do *you* know when is the best time to have a baby? Will two years from now be better than next year? Can you foretell the future? *Isn't God wiser than you?* Who should know better than He when a child should be born?" There was more, but the line that climaxed everything for me was, "*Isn't God wiser than you?*"

I went home and knew there were left now only the reasons "for." I wrote Bill, saying we'd better pray for another child, that were God's Will. It wasn't easy. It was the most difficult decision I have ever made in my life. And I was frightened as I had never been before. It was a fearsome, terrifying thing to do. I who had always planned, figured, calculated carefully, was now putting my whole life into other Hands. It was exactly as though I had been led blindfolded to the edge of a high diving platform and told, "Go ahead, jump. There's water below." I jumped, and landed in the Arms of God. Now I never want to be "on my own" or independent of Him again. Never!

We soon learned how that prayer was answered. The second pregnancy didn't make me an invalid. On the contrary, it seemed to make me stronger, healthier than at any time in my life. The birth was speedy with a minimum of complication. I had never looked better or felt better than the morning Joseph was born.

was the first fruit of reliance on God and as I held my newborn in my arms that day I thought of the eternal debt of gratitude I owed the Franciscan who gave me the rule for life and living. When he asked, "Isn't God wiser than you?" Our son Joseph gave his life to that priest whose name we don't even know.

From that time on our problems were always subordinated to one question: "Is it God's Will?" In that we had our answers, we made choices, decisions. It's not always easy. Gabriel doesn't drop in each morning with a bulletin saying, "Here's His Will for today." Sometimes you doubt, you question. Sometimes you have all your friends saying prayers and offering Masses that you may be given the light to know and the strength to do. But you have a serene confidence and an unquenchable flame of hope that so long as you are dedicated and consecrated to what He wants, He will not let you go astray and He will direct your life.

"MRS. J."



Yankee Know-how

Poverty and Marriage

Saint Francis of Assisi would have acted differently had been married. You can bet on that. After the "I do's" had been uttered and the golden handcuffs dropped smoothly and firmly on the wrists, any call from the spirit must be answered in writing and endorsed with two signatures. Delightful though it may be, and truly a road to sanctity, matrimony is still a wilderness-clipping ceremony. Whether a spouse wishes to retire to a local bar for a beer, or a local church for a prayer, due regard must be given to the ties that bind.

This is one side of the story, and the side you are most likely to hear repeated. If this were the complete story we might conclude that, as far as the married are concerned Saint Francis was just a holy crack-pot, and we may retire to our Beautyrest undisturbed by any qualms of conscience as to the obligation of holy poverty. Things are not quite as simple as that.

Marriage is not, as so many couples suppose, a brace and tickets for front seats in the amphitheatre from which we may watch the religious and the celibates being thrown to the lions. The road to Calvary is just as rough whether we traverse it single file or in couples. It is still a road of sacrifice. Over and above the fact of the difficulties that line the primrose path there is still the business of voluntary poverty, a self-inflicted detachment from the pottage of life, and it is meant for all Christians whether married or not. Saint Francis would have acted differently had he been married, but this does not mean that he would have divorced Lady Poverty. It means that he would have embraced her in a different way. He would have resolved the paradox of voluntary detachment in the midst of necessary attachment, for this is the special problem of the Christian married.

The Call to Poverty

Catholics in ever-increasing numbers are coming to realize that the Faith in our times is being asphyxiated by an insidious gas called the bourgeois spirit. This spirit is the impetus behind the mystical pilgrimage to the shrine of Mammon frequently referred to as "getting ahead." It is the identification of human happiness with the ever-increasing accumulation of stuff. Even the pagans are becoming sick of it. We have been witnessing in the past twenty years to a revival of the spirit of holy poverty. It has been spread like a crusade by Dorothy Day and the Catholic Workers. This holy poverty is the one round peg that fits the nasty hole of our vacuous concupiscence.

Many married people have heard this story and like it. They find it hard, however, to relate voluntary poverty to the growing demand for goods that goes with raising a family. The rat race of bargain hunting, overtime work, renewal of furniture, paying the rent, procuring dishes and diapers, dresses and drain-pipes . . . this is a crucifixion they would gladly escape. The sigh goes up, "If we could only afford to be poor! How nice it would be not to need all these things." I have talked the whole business over with people so bothered, and I should like to attempt a kind of round-plan for marital poverty. It will be brief and incomplete but it should do something more than scratch the surface.

Poverty and Administration

I think the key to the problem is found in a contrast between the poverty of Saint Francis and the poverty of La Trappe. The poverty of Francis was sudden, spontaneous, complete, and uncalculated. The poverty of the Cistercians is quiet, ordered, partial, and calculated. Both forms of poverty are rigorous enough so that no one can accuse me of watering down. In both cases, poverty is a means to the end of holiness. Yet they differ in practice. Why the difference?

Naked poverty must remain the privilege of those who have no temporal institution to maintain. When Francis stripped himself naked before his Bishop, and ran through the forest singing, he stripped only himself, and he ran alone. He had nothing to lose, and his deprivation deprived no one but himself. On the other hand, once an institution is founded, whether it be a monastery or a family, an order must be devised to sustain it and maintain it. Poverty can only be a means to this end. The rule and the order is the whole, of which poverty is a part. If poverty were to be forgotten in either institution, it would be better that the institution collapse. If poverty became primary, then the institution would collapse. A program of complete poverty can only be pursued at the sacrifice of institutions.

The family must be maintained as an institution, so poverty in marriage should be ordered, partial, and calculated. This does not necessarily limit the fervor of those who seek God, it merely limits the sphere in which the fervor is exercised. A father can still give his heart and mind to God and yet continue to administer property. A mother can give herself to God but it will be manifested mainly in the service of her husband and children. It's pretty obvious that the home cannot be run as though it were a Trappist monastery. We cannot cut the children down to a minimum diet nor get them out of bed at 2:30 a.m. for Matins.

and Lauds. Singing the office in choir would have its drawbacks. Without getting too involved in distinctions, the family is inclined to operate on the active principle rather than the contemplative and would consequently have a discipline unlike that of La Trappe. For the purposes of defining holy poverty for families, I have taken the liberty of dividing the discipline into four categories. Poverty in the family is specific. It is ingenious. It is communal. It is, above all, patient.

Marital Poverty Is Specific

Matrimony is specific. "Do you take *this* woman? I take *thee* John. *This* is my wife. *This* is my home. *These* are my jewels." The choice is emphatic and discriminating. Both nature and grace impose upon the married a specific obligation for specific persons. Since the family exists not only to bear but to raise children, then the parent is obliged to produce and to maintain specific things, *the things that the specific persons need*. The fact that matrimony is specific does not mean that love and affection terminates in any one creature or is confined to any four walls for that is idolatry. What it does mean is that marital love is centripital, generating outward from a specific love affair, a love affair in which Christ Himself is a partner and the first principle.

Holy poverty in marriage, then, is detachment from all things except those *specific* things that are required to maintain *this* family in the frugal comfort that encourages virtue. The revolutionary implications of this definition may not be immediately obvious. If you just think for a moment about all the things that the advertisers say we *all* need, and then think of how many of these things that most of us *do not need at all*, then you get a glimmer. Rooms in which small children play *do not need* shimmery waxed floors. Every family *does not need* a car. Every child *should not* go to college. Every child *should not* get a new Easter outfit. Every home *should not* have a washing machine. Every child *should not* have his own bedroom. Without exaggeration a million such statements could be made. One man's meat is another man's poison. One family's needs are another family's rubbish. Holy poverty rids itself of all impedimenta whether by fact or in desire.

Most families that I know who are trying to practice holy poverty have to a great degree solved the problem of luxury. They haven't any. This happy state is usually achieved by accepting the beggars that God sends whether by way of the door or by way of the womb. Self-denial then becomes a question of

denying one legitimate need so as to provide another. For example. . . .

A mother badly needs dental work. Frequent toothaches are making her irritable with the children. The car which Father needs at work is about ready to yield up the ghost for lack of a new clutch. It is possible to afford one, but not both. There's the problem. Whatever the decision, self-denial is involved. If Daddy gets his clutch, he feels like a heel. If Mother has her teeth fixed, she worries about Daddy all day long. Saint John of the Cross could find but little pleasure in such an indulgence.

A father is an ink renderer working for an inadequate salary. If he could take a course in drafting, he would make more money. He saves from his lunch money. Just as he has acquired enough for the course, Muriel, age six, gets bad tonsils. The doctor says they must come out. Daddy remains an ink renderer for another three years.

Father needs a new tool. Mother needs a new coat. The children need new shoes. The children get the shoes. Father gets a headache. Mother gets the once-over at Sunday Mass.

I have made no reference here to families who have more than they need, or to those whose needs are always adequately cared for. Such families, to practice poverty, must go outside the family circle. In most cases justice, not charity, demands this. It isn't hard to find someone who needs what you have in abundance. You usually sit beside such a person at Sunday Mass.

Poverty is Ingenious

We can presuppose that a Christian family grows normally in children planned *for* and not *against*. Few enterprises receive less encouragement. Not even the founding of a religious foundation goes so unapplauded or unaided by a secular world as does the maintenance of a large working-class family. Since this is the case, the poverty of such a family must be ingenious. In every way the parents must try to provide by their own labors the necessities they cannot afford at the stores. The things they must buy requires a mastery of the art of bargain-hunting to pay as little as possible for the best quality.

A few yards of muslin and some boxes of dye provide cheerful draperies for the living-room windows. A bit of skill with tools and a trip to the distributors replaces a cracked hinge on the refrigerator at a small fraction of the cost of having it serviced. A set of second-hand clippers prevents a clipping at the hands of the local barber every time the kids become shaggy. (You say the barber will suffer. . . . At fifty cents a clip he *should* suffer!)

A few extra dollars spent at the right time for vegetables quantity, to store or can, means a saving over a period of months. A cobbler's last comes in handy. A woman needs a good sewing machine. Practical nursing and an eye for symptoms keeps a doctor away except in serious cases.

What, you may ask, has all this got to do with poverty? Tools and skills are, in fact, riches, perhaps the only kind of material riches. Then why call it poverty? The poverty lies in the denial of luxuries, pleasures, rest, and comfort that must be made in order to purchase the tools and use them. You can't sit down and listen to "Inner Sanctum Mysteries" while there are two chairs to be mended. It is something to forego the ingratiating courtesies of the "Nice Store" clerks in order to crawl with the rest of the proletariat through mounds of goods on the bargain counter. You continue to wear the same shabby suit so that you can afford some plumbing tools. You work at the sewing machine until well after midnight when there are no tiny hands to get at the thread. For her birthday Mother gets a new pump for the antiquated washer. For his birthday Daddy gets a brace and bit so that he can re-assemble the kitchen furniture. The price of *Theology and Sanity* is expended on yard-goods for Junior's coat. The cost of a night-out is represented in the new paint-job on the old crib for the new baby. This is ingenious poverty.

Marital Poverty is Communal

This point requires much more consideration than I can give it here. We have been acting on the fallacy that families exist in a vacuum. We have forgotten that a family must be part of a community of families. Being poor as a church mouse is tough on church mice because mice do not practice mutual charity. In the usual run of things deprivation and prosperity alternate in our lives. In a community it is seldom likely that everyone will be impoverished or, at least, be without the same things at the same time. This fluctuation in affluence is a natural occasion for neighborliness. "What have I got that you need, what have you got that I need?"

We must rebuild communities within and without the city by reviving the economic system of mutual charity. This is already being done in many places. The breakdown of our present economy (an economy that cannot provide homes or decent food) is having the providential effect of throwing people together in mutual cooperation. Since every family, especially

ally the father, should be engaged in restoring the community, only poverty in our times must be communal.

All those who are convinced of the need for inter-family operation, will, as soon as they act upon it, discover that they must deny themselves certain pleasures, wealth, and comforts so that they can work with others to build homes, organize co-operatives, sponsor parochial units, found maternity guilds, operate family services, attend retreats and study meetings, aid the stricken, shoulder the burdens of the fallen . . . and so on, endlessly, practicing denial *as a family* so that the institution of the family will be preserved.

Marital Poverty is Patient

It would seem that the very wolves that snap at the flanks of the family are those extremely useful crosses that must go with family life. The constant demands for food, clothing and shelter, the bearing with sickness, weakness, and death, are the scourging disciplines that make the parent lean and trim to run so as to win. The firm demands of circumstance serve the same purpose in the married state as the rigorous rule provides for the monastic.

Though the poverty (as I have defined it) must be measured and planned, there is no way of avoiding the unforeseen crosses to which the family in particular is prey. It stands to reason, then, that all voluntary deprivations serve their best purpose, not in merely cleaning the decks for action, but in disciplining the will to do the Will of God. If we deny ourselves the things we could have (the night-out for the new crib) then it will be easier for us to accept graciously the trials we cannot avoid. Voluntary poverty must be patient or else it will be no more than stoicism without human competence. The plan will become everything. We will become poverty snobs. In the name of thrift we will become snobs. We will be as proud of what we *do* as the bourgeois are proud of what they *have*.

Austerity is not virtue. It is merely the soil in which virtue will grow if grace plants the seed, and Christ brings it to fruition.

ED WILLOCK

The Detachment of Z. B. Middleton, Esq.

"Zack" Middleton was the best tax lawyer in the whole of Lakeport, and doing very well for himself, thank you. Whenever the income-tax problems of a corporation got hopelessly snarled, the officers would phone for Zack. Precisely at the appointed time, neither five minutes early nor five minutes late, he would arrive at the corporation offices and plunge into his work. He would pore over the books for hours, mercilessly cross-examine every accountant, snap out endless demands for details and further details. Finally, after due thought, he would announce his decision, usually, which saved the corporation a tidy sum. Everyone knew that Zack demanded enormous fees, but everyone agreed that he was worth every last cent.

To most business men the income tax is a headache; but Zack reveled in it. Each added complication was money in his pocket. He had the happy knack of interpreting an involved mass of legal verbiage and he could smell out loopholes like a bloodhound following a fresh scent. He was always one jump ahead of rival lawyers and the business world of Lakeport was properly grateful. Zack also knew how to make shrewd investments and he watched his portfolio of securities grow year by year. At the age of thirty-five he was well on his way to being a millionaire.

One thing that business men liked about Zack Middleton was his decisiveness. With him there was no shilly-shallying. He kept an open mind until he had all the facts before him; once he had the facts, he made his decision and then he stuck to it. That fact made him a formidable court-room opponent. He stuck to his judgment with complete conviction and his self-confidence was so absolute that it bore down all opposition. Federal attorneys who walked into the courtroom with the smug feeling that now at last they had an unbeatable case often felt their confidence melt away in the face of his decisiveness. "He's as sure of himself as Zack Middleton" was almost a proverb in Lakeport.

Zack was a Catholic as well as a tax lawyer and he took Catholicism seriously, too—at least that was his story. He seemed to have solved the old dilemma of serving both God and Mammon. Without expressing it just that way, he felt that there were loopholes in the Divine Law just as there are in the Internal Revenue Code. His secret was efficiency. Relentless efficiency had made him a very highly successful lawyer; why shouldn't efficiency also gain him the Beatific Vision? Ordinary men, of course, could do both things well; they would naturally bungle one or the other.

at Zack realized that he was not by any means ordinary. So he mapped out a program for his spiritual life and followed it just as meticulously as he followed his efficient standards of business practice.

Mr. Middleton's spiritual life might not have been very deep, but his worst enemy could not deny that it was at least efficient. He surveyed all the Catholic churches in Lakeport and decided that Saint Romuald's had, on the whole, the best architecture, the highest musical standards, and the most intelligent preaching. So he rented a pew at Saint Romuald's, the fifth pew from the front on the Epistle side of the middle aisle. That placed him well up front where a prominent citizen ought to sit, and yet it didn't make him too conspicuous. Every Sunday morning you could see Mr. and Mrs. Middleton, the Middleton boy, and the Middleton girl in that fifth pew at the nine o'clock Mass. They were always on time and they always remained in their places a decent number of seconds after the priest had left the altar. Each Middleton had a missal and followed the Mass attentively. Monsignor Sullivan, the old, white-haired pastor, used to say that just to see the Middletons at Mass was better than the best sermon he could preach.

The balance of Zack's spiritual life was correspondingly efficient. He chose his confessor as carefully as his church, a priest with an unblemished reputation, but also one who was quite active in civic affairs. Such a priest, he felt, could appreciate a businessman's point of view. Zack never excused himself from the Lenten fast; he always consulted his confessor. He joined Catholic societies. He subscribed to Catholic magazines. He never forgot his morning and evening prayers. He always said grace before and after meals—out loud when he was dining at home. On the whole, men about town approved Zack's attitude. They felt it was rather a fine thing for a man to be a good church member, without, of course, carrying things to ridiculous extremes. It made for the stability of society. He never forgot the compliment paid him, after a couple of Martinis, by Bill Jermyn, president of Second National and a prominent Presbyterian, "You know, Zack, if more men were like us, we wouldn't have to worry about those darned communies."

Zack Middleton felt that efficiency required him to be just a little bit better than the average practical Catholic; so he had long ago adopted the practice of receiving Communion quite ostentatiously every First Friday at the seven o'clock Mass at Saint Romuald's on his way to work. He was reluctant to talk

about this custom of his. In fact, he never mentioned it to anyone except his wife. The congregation was quite small at week Masses at Saint Romuald's and, if any of his friends had ever seen him there, the fact had never been mentioned to him. Somehow Zack was rather glad of this. He had received a lot of public praise for his work as a trustee of Saint Ruth's College and for his success in heading the drive for the new Saint Vincent's Hospital but these First Friday Communions were something different between him and the Lord. When he started the practice it seemed like a moderately onerous extra task; but as time went on he found himself looking forward to the First Friday with a certain pleasant anticipation. They were something just a bit appraiseworthy grateful oases in the round of a busy life.

As time went on, the character of Zack's First Fridays began to change a bit. They were no longer always completely pleasant. There was, for instance, the First Friday after he had won his case for the Acme Manufacturing Corporation. Oh, he had been clever at that time. He had outsmarted the government lawyers, taken them quite off their guard by throwing up an unexpected legal technicality. It had added to his reputation no end and even his rivals had paid him reluctant compliments. But during Mass the next First Friday, he couldn't drive the matter out of his head. Felt deuced uneasy, as a matter of fact. Hadn't quite served the demands of justice that time, had he? When old Burke pulled things like that to save his clients a hundred dollars, people called him a shyster. But he had saved Acme ten thousand dollars and everyone was full of praise. Bothersome, that's what it was!

Then there was the First Friday after he had fired Ashtabula Fellow had cancer, with a wife and five children dependent on him. Couldn't do his work as bookkeeper any more. Always getting the accounts mixed up. Gave him a thousand dollars and told him to stay home. *I could have given him ten thousand and he never missed it*, thought Zack after Communion, *I could have set up a trust fund for the man instead of buying another block of General Motors for myself*. In his office all that day Zack had been preoccupied. Somehow he couldn't work with his usual efficiency. He would have made a bad mistake in writing the brief for the Pillsbury case if one of the bright young men in his office hadn't caught him just in time.

So Zack's First Fridays began to take on a different quality. They weren't as pleasant as they used to be. There seemed somehow to be a growing tension between him and the Lord. But he didn't drop the practice. *I'm no quitter*, thought Zack, *I see this*

ugh. Months passed and it got worse and worse. Sometimes felt vaguely afraid of going to Communion. He had to use his will power even to drag himself to church. More and more he had sleepless nights. His wife told him he was working hard, urged him to go out more. He thought of telling her anything, making a clean breast of it. *But no*, he said, *this isn't sort of thing I talk over with Ann. This is between me and Lord.*

The break came on that frosty First Friday in February. He could look back and remember every detail with extraordinary clarity. The alarm clock went off five minutes early. His hand shook when he was shaving and he nicked his chin. He could remember pausing for a minute in the hall to adjust before the mirror the brown scarf that Ann had knit for him. Everything was to go just right this morning because he had to catch the 8:17 to Amestown. The Acme people had called him in again this morning to advise them on their tax return. *Clever devils*, he thought, *they want me to pull another fast one.* The motor was cold and he had a hard time starting his car. He looked at his watch. *Just be able to get there on time.*

At precisely 6:59 Zack opened the door of Saint Romuald's and drew in his breath with sharp surprise. *Surprise at what?* he asked himself. *What is so extraordinary? This is my familiar parish. That hatchet-faced old woman is staring at me as she always does. And now Monsignor Sullivan is just coming on the altar, precisely on time as he always is.* But Zack's heart was racing like an automobile out of control. His breath was painful and labored. He felt borne down by an unknown, overwhelming force, partially conscious of his own insignificance. *I know, I know*, he cried at last within himself, *God is here.* A familiar truth! It was so many years since Zack had learned about the Real Presence from that little boy in the catechism class; yet it now came to him with the impact of an extraordinary truth just learned. He was borne up of himself by the clarity of the overwhelming fact. He felt his pride burned out of him. He stood before that blinding presence stripped down to his own insignificance.

In a few instants his long-held values tumbled down; they rearranged themselves into a different pattern like the bits of colored glass in a kaleidoscope. *What a fool I've been! Toiling and striving for things of naught. Only one thing matters. Only one thing matters. Only one thing.* Suddenly he looked up. It was Communion time already. The old fear swept over him, multiplied now a thousand times. *Who am I to receive the Lord?*

Dispirited and crushed at the new knowledge of his own unworthiness, he raised his eyes again. The people were already going down the aisle to the Communion rail. *O Lord, I am not worthy* he whispered humbly.

"Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for I must be in thy house today."

He was startled, but he had heard the words distinctly. There was no doubt about it. The Lord had spoken. With bowed head, Zacchaeus Middleton walked down the aisle to receive his Lord. The hatchet-faced old woman glared contemptuously. She hated all rich men and she hated Zacchaeus Middleton. She loved to whisper splenetic gossip against him with her cronies. So now she murmured against Christ.

"He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."

But Zack heard none of this. He had just discovered a new and delightful form of prayer.

"Behold, Lord, I give one-half of my possessions to the poor. (*Fifty thousand dollars to set up a trust fund for old Ashton. He can transfer my Standard Oil stock to St. Vincent's Home. Cost me that two hundred thousand. My other securities I'll divide between the Little Sisters of the Poor and the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Total, say, three hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Yes, that's one-half of my possessions.*) "And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." (*Guess I cheated the government out of ten thousand dollars in that Acme case. That will cost me forty thousand. Capital Motor case. Cost me, say, twenty thousand. All in all, maybe pay out a hundred and fifty thousand maybe two hundred thousand that way. Keep the house. Keep enough to take care of Ann and the kids, case anything happens to me. Yes, that's fair enough. Glad I made the decision now. Always was good on making decisions.*)

"Today salvation has come to this house, since he, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." And so there was joy among the angels of heaven for they were looking down from their celestial heights on a very efficient-looking lawyer who was kneeling in a pew of St. Romuald's Church, Lakeport, making his thanksgiving and receiving Communion. They looked into the secrecy of his soul and saw something spectacularly beautiful happening there. They looked at his head, now partially bald, and saw there something that looked suspiciously like an incipient halo. Zack's Guardian Angel received many congratulatory messages and the Cherubim came

sed a new hymn to sing in praise of the Most High Who
tributes His grace where He listeth.

But Zack was quite unconscious of all this. He pulled out
watch. *Just time to make the train*, he said to himself. As he
ove by the corner of Fourth and Main, the traffic cop saw him
uckling quietly. *Bet those Acme people will be surprised when
ell them off*, he was thinking, *I'm tired of doing their dirty work
them*. At the station he stopped at the lunch counter for a cup
coffee and a sandwich, after he had parked his car and bought
ticket. *Ann will be surprised, but I can bring her around*. He
ought a moment. *Maybe she won't be so surprised after all.
oman's intuition. Come to think of it, she bawled me out good
d proper about that Acme case. Asked me why the devil I had
go after dirty money like that. Asked me what I wanted so
uch money for, anyway. You can't take it with you. Zack, ten
llars gets you a hundred Ann will be tickled to death*. There
s a hiss of steam as the train came to a slow stop. The crowd
essed through the gates and Zack, feeling very buoyant, joined
em. He selected a seat in the smoking car and took out a cigar
the train started to pull out through the snow-covered yard.
uess a rich man can be detached from worldly goods, he thought,
ly he's got to be a very special kind of a rich man.

REV. PAUL HANLY FURFEY



STATEMENT OF POLICY

To make the rich poorer
Is not our aim—solely.
It's much more important
To make the poor holy.

BOOK REVIEWS

Perfection Without Purpose

THE FAILURE OF TECHNOLOGY

By Friedrich Georg Juenger
Henry Regnery Co., \$2.75

Last month we reprinted the first two chapters of this book in INTEGRITY, and intend to reprint nearly all

the rest of it in the coming months. Those who cannot wait are urged to buy the book. In our opinion it brings more real understanding to bear on modern problems in the economic and technological order than any other single work we have read. The author is a poet, one of the great literary figures of contemporary Germany. He is not a Catholic. Perhaps we ought to point out right away that Juenger misses the truth in a couple of his chapters, places where he comes right up against philosophy, and betrays a confusion resulting from having been educated with Kant and other moderns (what wouldn't his mind have accomplished if he had been nurtured on Saint Thomas!). Specifically, he is wrong about free will and time, yet in neither case does he give the simpleton's view and in neither case does his error penetrate his total analysis.

Probably it is because Juenger is a poet that he can see the *significance* of technology. His is the mystical, the contemplative view, in which all the pieces fall into place once you grasp their unifying principle. Do not suppose that because he is a poet he is vague and dreamy. He knows scientific principles and industrial methods, so that the book is filled with concrete examples.

What he sees, briefly, is that technological science has become an end in itself, been deified, and that what is happening in the modern world is that everything, the economy, our daily life, the state, and all human considerations are being systematically subordinated to the technological rationalization. The process is now nearing its end and revealing its true character; it is demoniacal.

Anyone who wants to be as wise as a serpent would do well to meditate on this book. It gives one a sense of having hit rock-bottom truth and on such a basis one can have dove-like simplicity, without danger of waking up tomorrow to find one has played the enemy's game after all.

PETER MICHAELS

To Worship Nothing Is Hell

SEEDS OF CONTEMPLATION

By Thomas Merton
New Directions, \$3.00

And all hell is filled with this nothingness of self!

With the catapulting to fame of the work of a contemporary religious by an interested and enthusiastic public, it is with trepidation that one adds a small voice in humble but sincere praise to the reviews of his most recent book, *Seeds of Contemplation*.

As the author himself remarks in his note of introduction, "the kind of considerations written in these pages ought to be something for which everybody, and not only monks, would have a great hunger in our time."

Should the reader not be cognizant of the fact that Thomas Merton is also a poet, it may come as a shock when he reads "God utters me like a word containing a thought of Himself." Certainly this is pure poetry, not interchangeable with the Incarnate Word—"I Am He Who Is."

He tells us the truest solitude is not something outside ourselves, not the absence of men or sound all around us, but an abyss opening up in the center of our own soul. The interior solitude is but the conscious effort to deliver ourselves from the desires and the cares and the interest of an existence in time and in the world. The one end that includes all others is the love of God.

Added to the joy of having this book of meditations on mental prayer, one can take delight in its unique binding, attractively done in monks' style: ideal for a gift.

LAURETTE V. KENNY

Welcome, Cross and Crown

CROSS AND CROWN

Quarterly edited by
Dominican Fathers of River Forest, Ill.

academic, but on the other hand something very different from a pious, inspirational journal. It would have to be rooted in the most orthodox mystical and ascetical theology, in the tradition of Saint Thomas and Saint John of the Cross. It would almost have to be edited by priests, although writers should include the laity. One would hope to see such a magazine deal especially with contemporary spiritual problems, of which lay spirituality is certainly one of the foremost.

Such a magazine has now appeared. Called *Cross and Crown*, its first issue has a leading article by Father Garrigou-Lagrange, and it includes writers Gerald Vann and Walter Farrell among its contributors. It is faithful to Thomism and orthodoxy. It is not erudite or academic. It makes many little efforts to relate its doctrine to the concrete, materialistic world of today, thus indicating that it proposes to deal with contemporary spirituality. Although this first issue is a trifle heavy, it is full promise for a more lively future, now that the foundations are solidly

The important thing is that the magazine has appeared and that it gives promise of practical enlightenment to laity as well as religious.

It is interesting to note that the English Dominicans have been editing a spiritual magazine (*The Life of the Spirit*) for two years or so. Theirs is a modest one, probably of necessity, reprinting little-known spiritual treatises, such as such. Already it is deep in matters of contemporary spirituality, especially lay spirituality. We hope *Cross and Crown* will develop in similar fashion. We regret a little that it is a quarterly rather than a monthly, as the latter might make for livelier discussion.

Subscriptions may be obtained from B. Herder Book Company, 15-17 West 42nd Street, New York 18, N.Y. The price is \$4.00 a year for the United States and Canada, Foreign \$4.50.

PETER MICHAELS

Holy Parish Priest

THE CURE D'ARS
By Abbe Francis Trochu
Newman, \$5.50

Here is a new printing of the definitive biography of Saint Jean-Marie-Baptiste Vianney, the holy parish priest of Ars, who is certainly one of the most remarkable

and interesting of modern saints. This life is based on the canonization proceedings and therefore is both comprehensive and accurate.

The Cure of Ars lived in the nineteenth century a life so penitential and austere as to demonstrate that the tales of the Desert Fathers are exaggerated. He had a poor little parish, but he set out to win it entirely to Christ, with first of all his own penances and prayers, then hour-long sermons which were much to the point, and finally by a battle to the death against dancing and against taverns. He won: the dancing ceased, the taverns closed. The people of Ars became model Christians, who prayed while they worked, gathered each evening in the Church for night prayer and exemplified Christian virtue. Into this model town then poured hordes of pilgrims and penitents, drawn to the Cure's confessional where he healed souls in a fabulous fashion. For years Saint Jean Vianney spent sixteen to seventeen hours a day in the confessional, beginning at 1 A.M. During the two or three hours he allowed himself for sleep, he was frequently kept awake by the Devil's antics, this especially if a sinner were due on the morrow.

It was just about the time of the American Civil War that this great saint died. Some three hundred priests and five thousand laity were in his funeral procession, while much of Europe sorrowed. All our secular school children know and venerate Abraham Lincoln, a great and noble man. That they never even hear of this contemporary who was far, far greater indicates the radical misdirection of their education.

CAROL JACKSON

Ad Majorem Gloriam Dei

IMMORTAL DIAMOND:
Studies In Gerard Manley Hopkins
Edited by Normand Weyand, S.J.
Sheed & Ward, \$5.00

An old Master of Novices once said that "uncounted poems of aspiring young Jesuit versifiers were undoubtedly annihilated by the bell summoning to examination."

tion of conscience twice daily." Nonetheless the poet-priest, Gerard Manley Hopkins, did not suffer *complete* poetic annihilation. This book gives us a picture of Hopkins' development in the Society of Jesus and incidentally, his poetic development. All the contributors are Jesuit priests and as such treat the influence of the ideals of that Society upon Hopkins' verse, which undoubtedly is the method the poet himself would have most desired. Many critics have thrown light upon Hopkins' verse in terms of mechanics, but few students or scholars have shown any insight, much less sympathy, for the *content* of his poems. They tend to dismiss Father Hopkins as a "frustrated" poet who, by some mistake or illusion, found his way into the Society of Jesus; the insinuation always being that, had Hopkins not been burdened with the duties and discipline of the Jesuit life, he would have produced more and better poetry. He might well have proved more prolific and have attained greater technical skill had

wed a different vocation, but he would have written quite *different* poetry. For his verse follows from, and is closely linked to, his Jesuit vocation, a vocation dedicated to becoming an *Alter Christus*. We see Hopkins' priestly concern for the salvation of souls in two of his finest poems, "The Wreck of the Deutschland" and "The Loss of the Eurydice," which you will find two excellent essays in *Immortal Diamond*. This volume also contains a few articles on the technical aspects of Hopkins, and Bonn's "Greco-Roman Verse Theory and Gerard Manley Hopkins" is the most valuable contribution in that it deals with an aspect heretofore little considered by critics. By-and-large student, scholar and general reader will find *Immortal Diamond* both instructive and absorbing in its treatment of the poetry of that unique Victorian, Gerard Manley Hopkins.

RUTH WILLARD

An Excellent Summary

WHAT IS THIS CATHOLIC ACTION?

Rev. Francis B. Donnelly
America Press, 25c

to bring out the providential nature of Catholic Action in our times. It contains line drawings which are also very useful in making the points. It begins with secularism and goes on to show that Catholic Action is essentially a program of integration, with the laity in the forefront and hierarchy in control. One thing that is usually not understood about Catholic Action, but which is made very clear here, is that the laity must assume full *executive* responsibility for the fulfillment of their apostolate. For people who have been working at Catholic Action for some time will profit from reading this work.

CAROL JACKSON

Beauty in a Beautiful Nutshell

AN ARTIST'S NOTEBOOK

Sister Mary of the Compassion, O.P.
The Sower Press, Matawan, N. J., \$1.50

Art is one of the manifestations of the divine image and likeness stamped on all by the Maker Who is all love and creativeness. Artists and admirers of art, losing sight of this, become makers and beholders of confusion and befuddlement and confusion characteristic of so much of the accepted art of our day. This is the theme which Constance Mary Rowe, A.R.C.A., Sister Mary of the Compassion, O.P. amplifies in *An Artist's Notebook*; she does it in forty-eight pages and sixteen illustrations, some of which are her own creation. They are memoranda jotted down during her work in art and as a student of Aquinas and his expositors on art and are illuminating and corrective of artistic aberrations. Artists and students will find in these pages an indispensable philosophy; directors of church societies will be provided with material for lively discussions at meetings; those charged with making the Lord's house beautiful after mastering *Artist's Notebook* will never again permit the hideous inside its gates. The apostolate is multiradiant and this little book is best calculated to bring out the Apostolate of Art.

Everyone has in him the makings of an artist, that is, the instinct to love and to make the lovely. The

A. J. R.

Liturgical Leader

THE LITURGICAL YEAR
By Abbot Gueranger, O.S.B.
Newman, \$4.00 per volume

The first five of the fifteen volumes of *The Liturgical Year* have already appeared, covering the period from Advent to Lent.

The author is the celebrated nineteenth century Benedictine who did so much to re-establish the Roman liturgy in France. A man of tremendous erudition and intense love of Church history, he brought to his subject wholehearted enthusiasm and a lively imagination. Abbot Gueranger is never loathe to express his personal opinions on liturgical developments.

He had bought Solesmes, an abandoned monastery, with the aid of private donations, and there drew about him a group of men dedicated to the Benedictine rule who devoted their lives to studying the liturgy. The Holy See approved the community and he became Abbot there.

The Solesmes records are known everywhere today as classic examples of Gregorian Chant. With this translation we now have Dom Gueranger writing on the liturgy in English to further this vital development. He divides the year into seven seasons: Advent, Christmas, Septuagesima, Lent, Passiontide and Holy Week, Paschal Time, and Time after Pentecost. Each volume presents first the historical background and liturgical explanation of the season, followed by commentaries on the Proper of the Time and the Proper of the Saints.

It was to offset much of the spiritual writing of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in France that Dom Gueranger undertook this work. He felt that real spiritual growth must come from the deepening of the liturgical spirit. This would seem to be doubly true today when there is such an overemphasis on novenas and the like, even to the point where in some churches the Mass is almost subordinated to popular devotion.

The Newman Bookshop is certainly to be commended for making this edition available.

ARTHUR T. SHEEHAN

Catacomb Christians

GOD'S UNDERGROUND
By Father George
as told to
Gretta Palmer
Appleton Century Crofts, \$3.00

"The Lord will discover the hidden ones in the woods: and in His temple all shall speak His glory."

For the past thirty years a people who denied Christ the King have sought Him crucified, in the woods.

in the cellars. *God's Underground* is the report of Father George, a Soviet priest who, when Russia entered the war, posed as a Partisan doctor and gained entry into the Soviet Union. He has returned with documented accounts of the anti-communist forces within Russia. Six months spent seeking out the "catacomb Christians" and learning that they represented at least one third of the entire nation.

Father George proves that if a bourgeois society is pushed to its ultimate, a godless state is the natural result. But just as naturally, it will be brought back by those of His people "who suffer themselves to drink of the Chalice of their country's passion."

BARBARA PHELAN

For Those Who
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LARGELY KNOX

Msgr. Knox seems to be all over our list these days – including the top of the sales: **THE MASS IN SLOW MOTION** (\$2.50) leads, though **Caryll Houselander's** wonderful book on the childhood of Christ in us, the **PASSION OF THE INFANT CHRIST** (\$1.75) is doing its best to draw level. Well, we don't know of two books we would sooner see in that position.

To return to **Msgr. Knox**. His translation of the whole Bible being finished, he has taken time to write a small book, **TRIALS OF A TRANSLATOR** (\$2), on the special problems faced by a translator of Holy Scripture, the sort of translation he was aiming at and why, and to answer some of the more notable criticisms that have been made of his work. It is a serious book, he does go to the roots of problems, does answer his critics, does throw a flood of light on why he chose this, that and the other word or sentence. But it is not exactly heavily written: in fact it reduced a hard-boiled proofreader to tears of mirth. It will almost certainly make you laugh too, but it will also help you to read the Bible with a new understanding and probably with a new enthusiasm too.

The latest fruit of the **Knox** translations is the **Knox Missal**—official title is **THE LATIN-ENGLISH MISSAL** and it will be ready on September 8th. In this, not only is all the Scripture in the **Knox** translation, but all the rest of the Missal has also been newly and excellently translated. If you would like to know more, write for a descriptive leaflet.

If you ever read poetry, try **Sister Maris Stella's FROST FOR ST. BRIGID** (\$1.75). She writes with such joy that you can hardly help being delighted as you read. We can imagine no pleasanter book for May, but if you want some

MAY SPECIALS

Caryll Houselander's book on Our Lady, **THE REED OF GOD** (\$2.25) is back in stock in good time for Our Lady's month; **Max Ward's SPLENDOR OF THE ROSARY** (\$2.50) awaits anyone whose rosary saying has settled into too much of a routine; and **Chesterton's** book of poems, **THE QUEEN OF SEVEN SWORDS** (\$1), small enough to slip into an ordinary envelope, is still a perfect small May-present.

If you write to us for information, leaflets, or anything else, remember to address your letter to Jane MacGill.

SHEED & WARD



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